



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## 1301.0 - Year Book Australia, 1966

ARCHIVED ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 01/01/1966

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## AUSTRALIAN MINTS

Soon after the discovery of gold in Australia a branch of the Royal Mint was established in Sydney in 1855. The Melbourne branch was opened in 1872 and the Perth Branch in 1899. The States of New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia provided an annual endowment in return for which the mint receipts were paid to the respective State Treasuries. Established in three main gold-producing colonies to refine and assay gold, the branches were soon also minting sovereigns and half-sovereigns for the British Government. The Commonwealth Government exercised no control over the operations of these mints. Its role has been that of a commercial customer concerned with the quality and cost of the coin produced to its orders. Owing to losses incurred in its operations, the Sydney branch was closed at the end of 1926.

The Australian branches of the Royal Mint were concerned primarily with the refining of gold, minting of Imperial gold coins and the production of bars and ingots of gold bullion for capon. The minting of Imperial gold coins was discontinued in September 1931.

From 1910 to 1916 Australian coins were minted in England by the Royal Mint, London, and the Mint, Birmingham Ltd., and in 1916, 1917 and 1918 by the Indian Mints. The minting of Australian coins was undertaken by the Australian Mints in 1916, and coins have been minted in the Melbourne branch of the Royal Mint from 1916 to the present time, at the Sydney branch from 1919 until that Mint closed in 1926, and at the Perth branch in 1922 and from 1940 to the present time.

During the 1939-45 War the two Australian mints were unable to meet the demand for Australian coins, and some coins were minted in the United States of America and India. In 1951-52 and 1952-53 some coins were minted at the Royal Mint, London, to meet the heavy demand for coins. Details of Australian coins obtained from each mint to 30 June 1965 are as follows: Melbourne, \$115,911,000; Perth, \$4,843,396; Sydney, \$976,000; United Kingdom Mints, \$6,032,000; United States Mints, \$12,000,000; Indian Mints, \$338,000; total \$140,100,396.

The construction of the Royal Australian Mint in Canberra provided the Commonwealth government for the first time with facilities for minting its own coinage.

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